United Nations

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit

General Assembly

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Chapter I
Introduction

1. The Joint Inspection Unit was created on an experimental basis under General Assembly resolution 2150 (XXI) of 4 November 1966 and was extended thereafter under Assembly resolutions 2735 A (XXV) of 17 December 1970 and 2924 B (XXVII) of 24 November 1972. By its resolution 31/192 of 22 December 1976, the Assembly decided to establish the Joint Inspection Unit as a standing subsidiary organ and approved the statute of the Unit, with effect from 1 January 1978. Under the terms of article 1, paragraph 2, of the statute, the Unit is responsible to the General Assembly and, similarly, to the competent legislative organs of those specialized agencies and other international organizations within the United Nations system that accept the statute.

2. The Unit is composed of 11 Inspectors appointed by the General Assembly on the basis of their special experience in national or international administrative and financial matters, including management questions, and with due regard to the principles of equitable geographical distribution and reasonable rotation. Inspectors serve in their personal capacity and are appointed for a term of five years, renewable for one term.

3. The Inspectors have the broadest powers of investigation in all matters having a bearing on the efficiency of the services and the proper use of funds and, to those ends, make on-the-spot inquiries and investigations. They are mandated to provide an independent view through inspection and evaluation aimed at improving management and methods and at achieving greater coordination among organizations. In pursuance of its objectives of enhancing the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations system, the Unit is required to satisfy itself that the activities undertaken by the organizations are carried out in the most economical manner and that the optimum use is made of the resources available for carrying out those activities. The Unit may issue reports, notes and confidential letters. Reports are addressed to one or more organizations or to all the organizations when the subject is of interest to the system as a whole, for consideration by the competent legislative organs of the organizations concerned. Notes and confidential letters are submitted to executive heads for their own use, as they may decide. The Unit submits annual reports to the General Assembly and to the competent organs of the participating organizations.

4. The Unit is assisted by an Executive Secretary and by such staff as may be authorized in the budget of the Unit. The budget is included in the regular budget of the United Nations, and its expenditures are shared by the participating organizations.

5. The present report, covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2000 is the thirty-second of its kind prepared by the Unit since its establishment.

Chapter II
General information

A. Participating organizations

6. The following organizations have accepted the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit: the United Nations, including its programmes, funds and offices,[1] the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

B. Composition

7. The composition of the Unit in 2000 was as follows. The member's term of office expires (or expired) on 31 December of the year indicated in parentheses:

Louis-Dominique Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso), Chairman (2005)
Sumihiro Kuyama (Japan), Vice-Chairman (2004)
Andrzej Abraszewski (Poland) (2000)
Fatih Bouayad-Agha (Algeria) (2002)
Armando Duque González (Colombia) (2003)
John D. Fox (United States of America) (2000)

Homero L. Hernández-Sanchez (Dominican Republic) (2002)
Eduard Kudryavtsev (Russian Federation) (2002)
Francesco Mezzalama (Italy) (2002)
Wolfgang Münch (Germany) (2005)
Khalil I. Othman (Jordan) (2002)

8. At its 96th plenary meeting, on 10 May 2000, the General Assembly appointed Doris Bertrand-Muck (Austria), Ion Gorita (Romania), Wolfgang Münch (Germany) and Louis-Dominique Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso) for a term of office beginning on 1 January 2001 and ending on 31 December 2005. Andrzej Abraszewski (Poland) and John D. Fox (United States of America) completed their terms of office on 31 December 2000.

9. In accordance with article 18 of its statute, which provides that the Unit shall elect each year from among the Inspectors a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman, the Unit elected Sumihiro Kuyama as Chairman and Armando Duque González as Vice-Chairman for 2001.

C. Human and financial resources

10. The Joint Inspection Unit is assisted by a secretariat that consisted, in the year 2000, of an Executive Secretary (D-2), eight research officers (2 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3 and 2 P-2), one information technology officer (P-3), three research assistants (1 G-7 and 2 G-6), and six other General Service staff.

11. In preparing its budget proposals for the biennium 2002-2003, the Unit decided to introduce a new approach aimed at improving its research capacity by reallocating its professional post resources, with a view to widening its capacity, as well as by allowing more flexibility to make use of required expertise under short-term contracts. For this purpose, the Unit has requested: (a) the abolition of two P-2 posts; (b) the creation of one additional P-4 post; and (c) an amount of US$ 60,000 for individual contractors to recruit temporary Professional staff. The costs related to (b) and (c) would be more than offset by the abolition of the two P-2 posts.

12. Past experience has demonstrated that entry-level (P-2) staff require a substantial period of training in the Unit prior to becoming fully productive. The size and nature of the work of the secretariat do not allow the use of its scarce resources for such in-house training.

13. As explained in detail in the annual report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 1999,[2] the secretariat is understaffed in terms of General Service positions. The proportion of General Service staff to Inspectors and Professional staff in the Unit is around 43 per cent, while in the overall United Nations Secretariat the rate is 58 per cent. The situation is far more critical in secretarial positions. Among the three such positions currently budgeted, two of them are fully devoted to the preparation of the Unit's reports, and the remaining secretary is performing specifically secretarial functions to serve the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, nine other Inspectors, the Executive Secretary and nine Professional staff. The Unit has proposed to partially redress the current situation by the creation of two additional secretarial positions (General Service (Other level)).

14. The requested amount of $7,334,400 for the biennium 2002-2003 remains the same as the appropriation for the biennium 2000-2001. The proposed increase in post items ($19,900) is fully offset by a similar decrease in non-post items.

15. It should be noted in this context that the General Assembly, by its resolution 55/230 of 23 December 2000, requested the Secretary-General to submit the report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the budget proposals made by the Unit as required by the statute.

Chapter III
Summary of main activities

A. Programme of work

16. During the past few years the Joint Inspection Unit has continued to endeavour to comply with directives of the General Assembly, in particular its resolutions 50/233 of 7 June 1996 and 54/16 of 29 October 1999. In the latter, the Assembly invited the Unit to give priority to the reports requested by the participating organizations. Among other initiatives, the Unit has undertaken a series of comprehensive reviews of the administration and management of its participating organizations; thus, the Unit has completed and submitted for action by the appropriate legislative organs comprehensive reviews of management and administration in ILO and UNESCO. A similar exercise was recently completed for ITU, and

one is about to be completed for WHO. The 2002 programme of work includes a similar review for FAO.

17. During the reporting period the Unit produced nine reports and five notes. Two reports had a system-wide scope, two covered several organizations, and five dealt with single organizations. The five notes related to the handling of the Unit's reports by five participating organizations (see annex).

18. As for its programme of work for 2001, the Unit has included 13 new reports and 1 note. Among them, seven are system-wide, two cover several organizations, and four deal with a single organization. Of the 13 reports, 6 were requested or suggested by either legislative organs or secretariats of participating organizations. In addition, the Unit carried over nine reports and two notes from its previous programmes of work, thus totalling 22 reports and 3 notes currently under preparation.

19. The Unit has established internal measures to expedite the preparation of its reports so that they may be issued in advance of meetings of the legislative organs of participating organizations, thus facilitating the thorough and effective consideration of the reports by those organs. It is noted, however, that this goal has been often hindered, among other reasons, by the tardiness of some secretariats of participating organizations in providing the Unit with information and/or comments requested by it in a timely manner.

B. Interactions

1. Member States and legislative organs

20. In addition to the general contacts held with representatives of Member States during the preparation of reports and/or during their presentation to the legislative organs, the Inspectors have enhanced interaction with Member States and legislative organs, especially on the question of the handling of Joint Inspection Unit reports (implementing the Unit's follow-up system) by a number of participating organizations during the reporting period.

21. Furthermore, the Unit has initiated a series of informal meetings with Member States represented in Geneva for exchanging views on a number of issues including its programme of work.

2. Participating organizations

22. The Unit has continued its efforts to improve interactions with its participating organizations. During the reporting period, the Unit undertook extensive discussions with the secretariats of WHO, UNIDO, WFP, FAO, WMO, WIPO, ITU, IAEA, UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA on how to handle reports of the Unit or implement the Unit's follow-up system. During this process the Unit actively consulted representatives of Member States of those participating organizations seeking their advice, opinions and support on the best ways to make the Unit's reports more effective and relevant to the organizations.

23. Meetings were also held by the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Inspectors and the Executive Secretary with a number of executive heads of participating organizations and other high-level officials of the United Nations system to exchange views on issues of common interest and in connection with the preparation of reports.

24. In a number of instances, when the Unit's reports were taken up by the legislative organs of the participating organizations, the Inspectors concerned introduced or otherwise participated in discussion of the reports and/or followed up on their deliberations. In addition, both the Chairman and Executive Secretary attended the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly and participated in the meetings of the Fifth Committee and informal consultations on agenda items concerning the Unit. The General Assembly adopted a substantive resolution on the Unit (55/230 of 23 December 2000).

3. Oversight bodies

25. By the above-mentioned resolution, the General Assembly invited the Unit to continue to develop interaction with other United Nations oversight bodies and to intensify relations with the oversight bodies of other participating organizations with a view to achieving better coordination and sharing best practices. In that regard, the Unit pursued the matter in more detail during the thirty-second meeting of the representatives of the internal audit services of the United Nations organizations and multilateral financial institutions, which was held in Bangkok in June 2001.

26. The Unit participated in the Fourth Tripartite Oversight Coordination meeting between the United Nations Board of Auditors, the Joint Inspection Unit and the Office of Internal Oversight Services,

organized by the Office of Internal Oversight Services and held at United Nations Headquarters on 7 November 2000.

27. During the reporting period, the Unit also participated in the thirty-first meeting of the representatives of internal audit services of the United Nations organizations and multilateral financial institutions, held in Rome in May 2000, as well as the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation, held in Geneva in early 2000.

C. Follow-up of Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations

28. During the reporting period, the majority of the executive heads of the participating organizations submitted to their legislative organs a number of reports of the Joint Inspection Unit. However, there were not many instances, as before, where legislative organs of participating organizations took specific action on the recommendations contained in the reports.

29. With a view to ameliorating the situation, the Unit has been taking initiatives to enhance dialogue with a number of participating organizations. These have resulted, for instance, in an agreement on follow-up procedures, initially with the WHO secretariat, which was endorsed subsequently (in May 2000) by the WHO Executive Board. Details on those matters will be included in the special report that the General Assembly, in paragraph 6 of its resolution 54/16, requested the Unit to submit to it at its fifty-sixth session.

Notes

[1] Including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the World Food Programme (WFP), which is a subsidiary body of FAO, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 34* (A/55/34), para. 10.

Annex

Joint Inspection Unit reports and notes issued during the reporting period

Reports

A/55/57	Administration of justice at the United Nations (JIU/REP/2000/1)
A/55/59	The use of consultants in the United Nations (JIU/REP/2000/2)
A/55/423	Senior-level appointments in the United Nations, its programmes and funds (JIU/REP/2000/3)
	Review of management and administration in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (JIU/REP/2000/4)
A/55/856	United Nations system common services at Geneva, part II, case studies (International Criminal Court, Joint Medical Service, Training and Examination Section, Diplomatic Pouch Service, Joint Purchase Service) (JIU/REP/2000/5)
A/55/857	Delegation of authority for management of human and financial resources in the United Nations Secretariat (JIU/REP/2000/6)
A/55/798	Young Professionals in selected organizations of the United Nations system: recruitment, management and retention (JIU/REP/2000/7)
A/55/834	Review of management and administration in the Registry of the International Court of Justice (JIU/REP/2000/8)
	Strengthening the investigations function in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2000/9)

Notes

JIU/NOTE/2000/1	Handling of JIU reports by IMO
JIU/NOTE/2000/2	Handling of JIU reports by WFP
JIU/NOTE/2000/3	Handling of JIU reports by UNIDO
JIU/NOTE/2000/4	Handling of JIU reports by IAEA
JIU/NOTE/2000/5	Handling of JIU reports by UNESCO

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